

# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Community Arts Partnership Announced

### **California State Railroad Museum and 40 Acres Art Gallery Unveil Black History Month Programming**

SACRAMENTO – Two all-new exhibits will join a series of public programs at the 40 Acres Art Gallery and Cultural Center in Sacramento's Oak Park neighborhood. Highlighting Black History Month—February—these offerings are the result of a partnership between 40 Acres Art Gallery and the California State Railroad Museum, a California State Park.

“Laborers of the Railroad” features the large-scale paintings of Kentucky artist Mark Priest, documenting his personal experiences as a railroad laborer and machine operator. Mark Priest worked as a railroad laborer for almost seven years, while studying painting. His stories about the railroad are the driving narratives of his work. Priest's paintings are strong in depicting the lives of the working classes – those who rely on their hands, and hard labor, to make a living. Beautiful, vibrantly colorful and larger-than life, Priest's paintings share an aspect of labor not frequently seen or discussed. This exhibit runs from February 1 through March 26.

Complementing Priest's paintings is “Artifacts from the California State Railroad Museum,” an exhibit of photographs and artifacts from the Museum's archives. This exhibit presents a visual experience that places Priest's paintings within a historical context. Priest's workers, contemporary in nature, have their foundation in the Pullman porters, laborers, tracklayers, locomotive firemen, car stewards and kitchen crews depicted in these artifacts and images. This exhibit runs from February 1 through March 26.

The 40 Acres Art Gallery is integrated within a larger entity, the 23,000 square foot, multi-use 40 Acres Art Gallery and Cultural Center. The 40 Acres project, located on the corner of Broadway and 35<sup>th</sup> Street, is a part of St. HOPE Academy, founded in 1989 by NBA all-star Kevin Johnson to bring education and revitalization initiatives to Johnson's childhood home of Oak Park, Sacramento. The 40 Acres project also includes a Starbucks, underground books® bookstore, a barber shop, twelve loft-style apartments and the historic 200-seat Guild Theater. For more information, visit the Gallery at [www.40acresartgallery.org](http://www.40acresartgallery.org) or call (916) 732-4673.

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**In addition to the exhibit itself, interested persons are invited to attend the following related, educational events in February and March 2005:**

***Saturday, February 12 - 2nd Saturday Exhibit Reception***

Artist Mark Priest will speak at 7 p.m. Paul Hammond, Director of Public Programming for the Railroad Museum, will be on hand to discuss railroad work and railroad life informally. *At the 40 Acres Art Gallery, 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Free. Information: (916) 732-4673.*

***Sunday, February 13 - Film: "10,000 Black Men Named George"***

This film, directed by Robert Townsend, tells the true story of how a courageous leader, A. Philip Randolph, came to be known as "the most dangerous man in America" for establishing the first black union for Pullman Porters. Film rated "R" for mature audiences. *At the Guild Theater, 3 p.m. Free. Information: (916) 732-4673.*

***Each Wednesday during the month of February -Brown Bag Tour of Exhibitions***

Bring your lunch and enjoy a tour of the featured exhibits, *Mark Priest: Laborers of the Railroad* and *Artifacts from the California State Railroad Museum*. *At the 40 Acres Art Gallery, 12 noon. Free. Information: (916) 732-4673.*

***Saturday, March 12 – Working in the Shops: The Southern Pacific Railroad Sacramento Shops***

Kyle Wyatt, Curator of History and Technology at the California State Railroad Museum, will give a presentation about the history of the Southern Pacific Railroad Sacramento Shops and the people who worked in these sprawling, bustling local facilities during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. *At the 40 Acres Art Gallery, 2 p.m. Free. Call (916) 732-4673 or email [kcurry@sthope.org](mailto:kcurry@sthope.org) for reservations.*

These partnership exhibits and programs at the 40 Acres Art Gallery and Cultural Center kick off a year of programming at the California State Railroad Museum that will focus on the people of the railroad. In July 2005, an exhibit of photographs highlighting railroad workers will open at the Railroad Museum, in partnership with the Center for Railroad Photography and Art of Madison, Wisconsin. And in September a major, permanent enhancement to the Museum's exhibits will debut, highlighting railroad work and railroad life. This all-new exhibit will bring the subject to life through artifacts, images, and life-sized human figures placed in a variety of appropriate settings throughout the Museum.

The California State Railroad Museum is operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the nonprofit California State Railroad Museum Foundation. It is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The complex of facilities includes the well-known Railroad History Museum, plus the reconstructed Central Pacific Railroad Passenger Station and Freight Depot, 1849 Eagle Theatre, and Big Four and Dingley Spice Mill buildings at Old Sacramento State Historic Park.

For 24-hour information, please visit [www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org](http://www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org) or telephone (916) 445-6645.

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